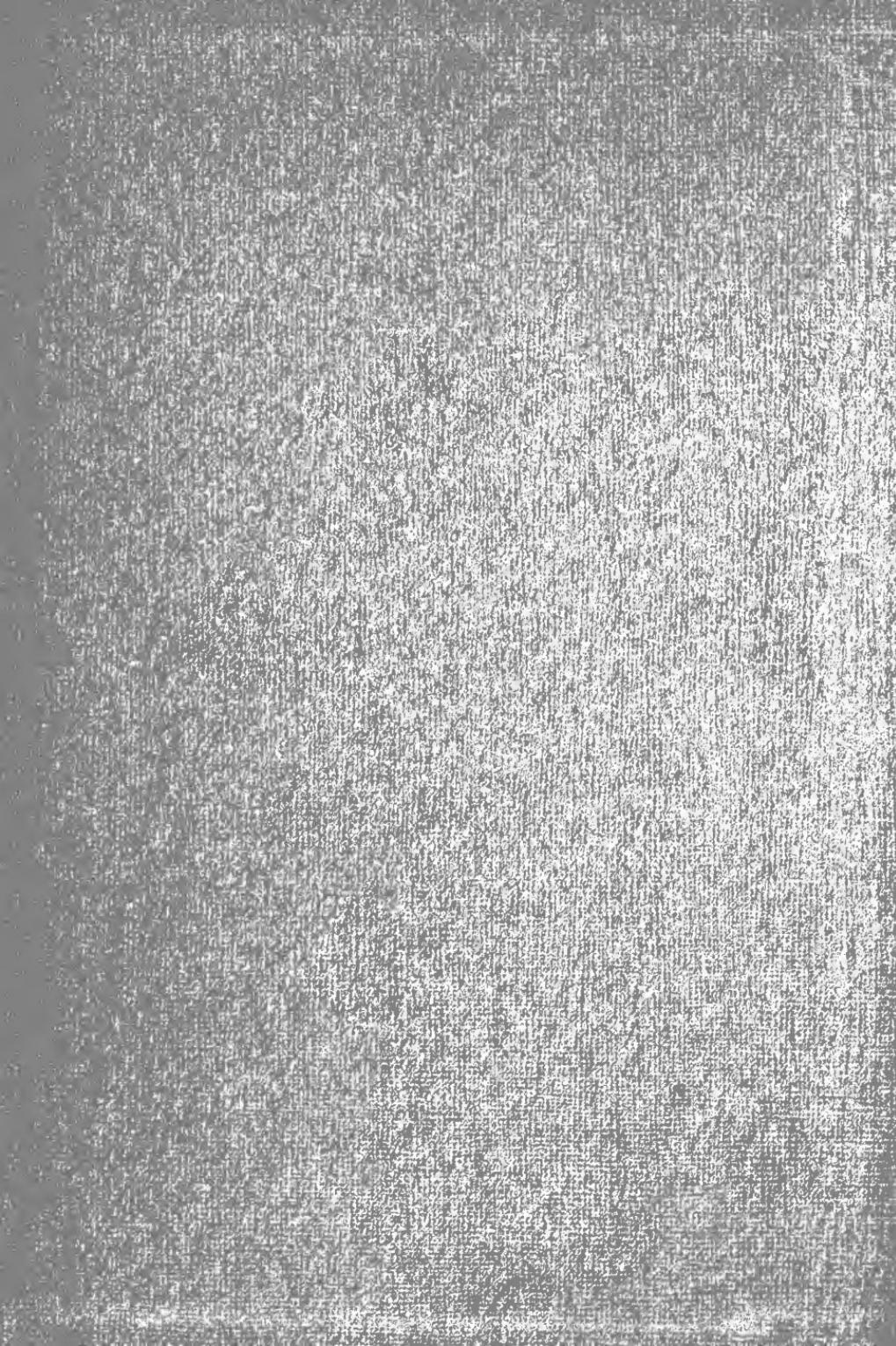


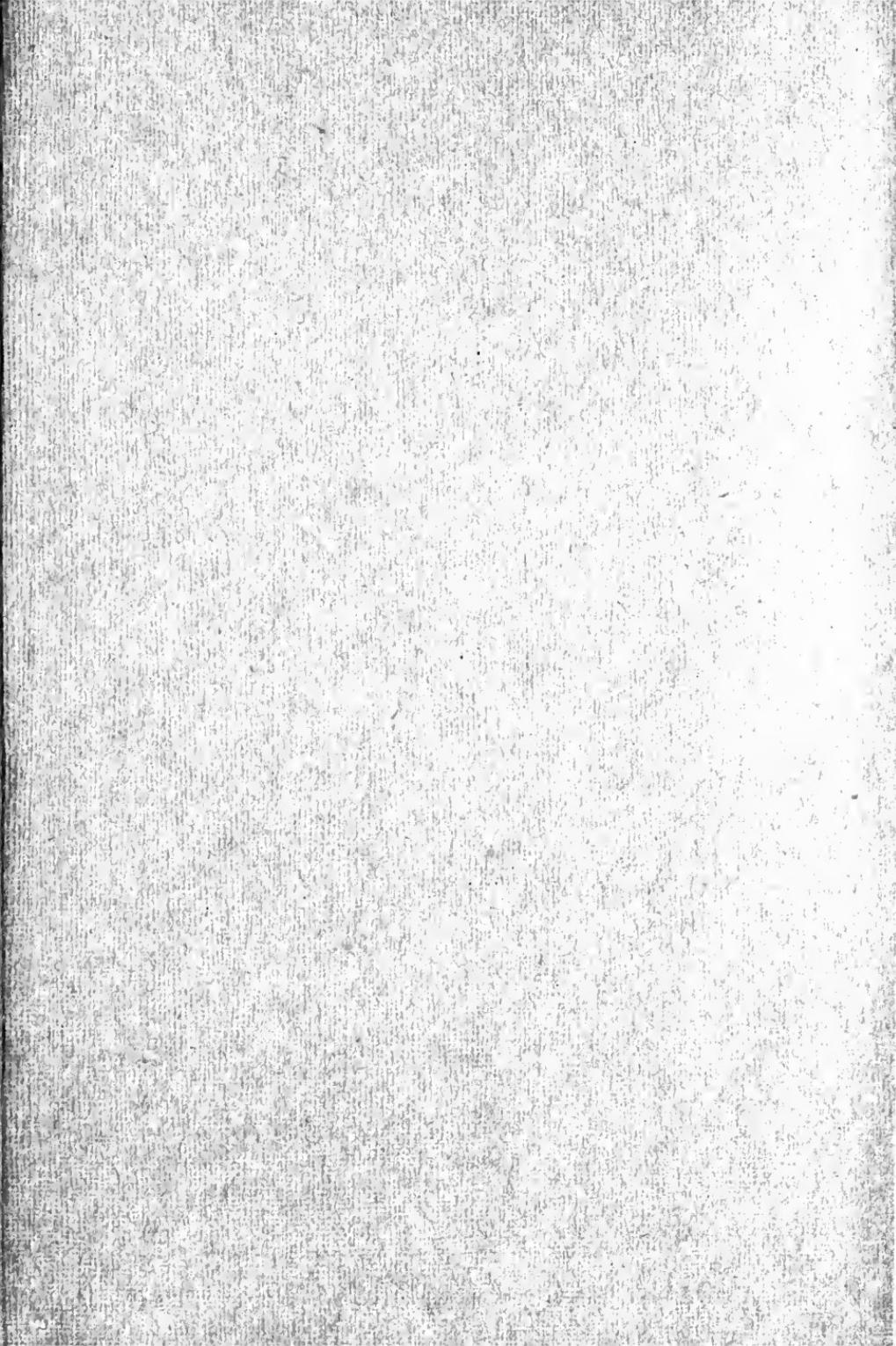
A SOUL'S FARING

MURIEL STRODE



~~2.00~~
1.00

Mrs. G. Jackson
456 Grand Rd



If he had money - from Jane -
but he cheated the Lord
Now he sits in a narrow cell
Under lock - for 3 years - &
When he is released he
Will have lost step - others will
have taken his place -
The glamour of money won
His soul down - & now he
Can't take it -
He was a big soul as by
This world from that the
temptation - but he could
Resist it - money -
For but I -

If you give me a holiday beauty to life
- the table is set & the paper and silk
she is at a stand still.
But Anna half misses me I know it
She has no birth for she has always been
Blossom here all the places &
- especially her big red from the Alabam
- She says she's blackberry
Mrs White & Gold
Lynn

A SOUL'S FARING

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A SOUL'S FARING

By

MURIEL STRODE

BONI AND LIVERIGHT
PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK

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Printed in the United States of America

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CREATION SONGS

CREATION SONGS

I

I will tell you the things that will ravish your ear
to hear, for I am Life's lover.

She told me her secrets, as she lay in my wanton
arms.

She told me the things of her deep yearning, of her
secret heart.

She told them to my love for her, to the press of
my breast.

She told herself to my kisses.

She met my warm breath with disclosures, as she
held me close in an informing embrace.

CREATION SONGS

II

I am Life's lover!

**I plant the meaning of my great yearning upon
her upturned lips.**

I press her to my breast in a great answering.

She shall define the meaning of my fire and fever.

CREATION SONGS

III

I am the love-mad of life.

I have reached out in my pain to the love-frenzied
grouse.

I have called in my understanding to the deer in
their rutting season.

I have come with gentle words to the mating chirp-
ings in the eaves.

I have touched tenderly the seeking pollen.

I have come with bated breath to the spawn at the
beginnings of streams.

I am the ache of overfullness.

My breasts are crowded with containing.

My hands tremble with the eagerness of me.

I am rent and torn with the pain of the unex-
pressed.

CREATION SONGS

IV

I am drunk with being,—
Life's inebriate reeling down an enchanted way.
I shout my maudlin greeting to the trees.
I grasp familiarly the gentle fingers of the grass.
I press my wine-wet lips to the roses with my insistent kissing.

CREATION SONGS

V

I know the thrill of the grasses when the rain pours over them.

I know the trembling of the leaves when the winds sweep through them.

I know what the white clover felt as it held a drop of dew pressed close in its beauteousness.

I know the quivering of the fragrant petals at the touch of the pollen-legged bees.

I know what the stream said to the dipping willows, and what the moon said to the sweet lavender.

I know what the stars said when they came stealthily down and crept fondly into the tops of the trees.

CREATION SONGS

VI

I am the omnipotent life, the potency-thrill.
I am the fructifier meeting the urge of space, scattering my spawn like the dust of stars in the Milky Way.

I am red fire leaping in and out of channels, the insistence of me, the yearning.

I am the demand.

CREATION SONGS

VII

I am drunk with the wine of me, intoxicant of my
own being,
Bacchante of my own soul's steepings,
Beset by the realization of me, driven by knowing.
I pour myself out like the singing starling.
I drink, and kiss Life's wanton lips with the drip-
ping lips of me.

CREATION SONGS

VIII

I am the universe's harlot,
Selling myself to ecstasy's thrills;
Giving myself to be debauched of stars, ravished
of ineffableness;
Seduced by a wanton ungraspableness;
Coming to marriage bed with infinity's horde,
Wanton wife of the eternity of things.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

I

I, the atom of creation, have arrived.

I make contact with gods, I align with spheres.

I am the test, the processment, the determining.

I am life. I impinge you. I fall upon you with great weights.

I eviscerate you. I tap your arteries and drain you.

I am the insistent one. You cannot escape me.

I unsettle you. I make you moan over the nights and the days.

I bring you weeping, wringing your hands, crying out to the pale stars, promising an atoning.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

II

I am attuned to the utterance.

Day and night strike on the chords of me.

Humanity brushes me with its sweep.

Winds moan over me.

I am attuned to worlds' turnings.

I melt and merge in the musical ether.

I am the long ropes of steel, and I am the strands
of blue moonlight—the strength and the
beauty.

I am the violets, and I am the rocks—the kindness
and the no-capitulation.

I come in the big recognition of little things, in the
stupendous portent of a moment, the dynam-
ics of a blade of grass.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

III

I come in my adequacy, my own sufficiency, lifting
you, and me, and the world.

Nothing is formidable, no thing blocks my way.

I smile in unfear, in conscious potency.

I come with yet more strength for the strong, with
suage for the assuager. I am the sustaining
arms for the all-sufficient one, the comfort of
the comforter.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

IV

I do not come with charted countries,—I bring you
plains that are trackless, seas that have never
known sail.

I bring you visions without survey, time that has
never been espoused.

I bring that that has never been accepted, that is
beyond the pale, the impossible, the un-
dreamed-of thing.

I am the doer of things that cannot be done.

I chant impossibilities.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

V

I am one with the beatings in the breast of the sea,
with the suspiring mountains and the living
ether, with the pulsings of day and the throb-
bings of night.

I am beat upon by ineffableness, by imperceptibili-
ties.

I walk in the presence of unformed things.

I am the thrill of the indefinable, that has identity
but you cannot measure it, you cannot call its
name.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

VI

I am the cliffs—floods pour down upon me and I stand.

I am the ages, with infinity stretched between my shores.

I am man the container, with God pouring into me like a stream.

I am the channels, the in and the out.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

VII

I am the spirit of high hills and of unconfined spaces.

I am the sense of the boulders, of the earth that is gnarled.

I am wild, and rough, and meaningful.

I grasp Life's wrists until it writhes in pain, in the uncontained forcefulness of me.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

VIII

I am the revolt, the vehemence, the protest. I am
the passion.

I throw myself against the resistance.
It is the heave and the thrust of me.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

IX

I am the lyrist of an hour,—and I am the sayer of
centuries. I pronounce for eternity.

I tell you my human pain,—and I tell you my
God-longing.

I tell you the ache of my finite being,—and the
throes of my infinite incompleteness.

I sing the little lilt of a day,—and I sing the pæans
of time.

I am the cry of a titmouse whose nest is robbed,—
and I am the cry from out the devastated
womb of worlds.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

X

I celebrate. I spread the fete-day of achievement.
I come with new adventure.
Out of the dew of the morning I come with further
word, with a new import and meaning.
The ages' interpretation I refute. I bring the
definition out of the hour.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XI

I perpetuate me.

I fight the fight for my soul, against my own extinction.

I align myself with inextinguishableness.

I stretch in a living, breathing trail. From ages' rim to ages' rim I stretch with my sufficiency.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XII

I am the promise written across the sky, I am the portentous thrill.

I am not definitive—I am the pulsings of limitlessness.

I do not analyze—I fill with a great, unnamed yearning.

I do not determine—I spread the universe before you.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XIII

I do not bring you by argument, but by thrills of
your blood.

I precipitate you, not by force, but by a feeling. I
surcharge you with an emotion.

I melt you and me to a pouring. We burn in the
white fire of me.

We are safe in my magic. I restore to a new shape
and use.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XIV

I am the bore-worm of time, hewing down the
years with the slow incisors of me.
Eons yield to my insistence. I eat at their roots
until time topples at my slow devouring.
I am the Answerer. I walk the starry strands of
skies, grasping the intent.
I read the secret. The unanswering Sphynx finds
its voice to me.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XV

Ten thousand voices say No, but I come in ten
thousand multiples of my strength.

I am my own affirmative that transcends all nega-
tives and denials.

The day renounces me—and I sink my roots
deeper into the centuries.

You may not hear, but your dust will quicken.

Myself!—intrepid I fling it in kindness to the
remoteness of time.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XVI

I span continents and overstep seas.
Planets are in my itinerary.
I greet the sun in its habitat.
I sail placidly with the moon.
I am the big concept, the infinity of measurement.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XVII

I am the apex, standing aghast at the route I have
come.

I am the universe, appalled at my own magnitude.
I lead the concourse of onwardness, yet dumb with
incomprehensibleness of that which I am.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XVIII

I step the hills, I escape the thraldom.
I match my breath against the great, deep currents
 of the sky, against the suspirings of time.
I am the claimer of infinity.
I am the cycles of increasement, the ages of the
 accretion of life.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XIX

I am the extreme, that you may have the courage
to be the average.

I anticipate time, that you may come in perfect
articulation with the day.

I mount to the perilous heights, that you may have
the courage to come up to the happy mountain
meadows.

I build my towers to the sun, I flaunt my jeweled
minarets to the sky, that you may build a
glad roof and a happy housement.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XX

I am not the follower of designs: I am the con-
ceptor. I bring the plans.

I am the creator and his seven days. I bring the
blueprint of creation.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXI

I am the accouchement of formidable things.

I bear a hill, I bring into conscious existence a forest, a plain, or a sea. It is their spawn I scatter.

I plant the seed of mastodonic birth.

I give my breasts to titanic things.

I am delivered of infant mountains,

The fœtus of wide-open space forms in me,

The firmament is conceived.

I come fructified of big issues, the spawn-bed of world-events.

I am Titan Mother, the Great Progenitor, Parent of Stupendities.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXII

I am the pillars that uphold the earth, the arch that
lifts up the sky.

I am the rim of the horizon supporting the up-
turned bowl.

I command night and day. Stars course at my
calling, the moon shines at my behest.

At my command the sun stands still.

I am keeper of light and of shade—it is I that
disperse.

I set the tides free—it is my leash that restrains
them.

I am keeper of the caves of the winds—it is I that
open the door and send them scurrying.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXIII

Eternity is in my right hand;
Infinity rests like a drape on my shoulders.
I am omnipotent, omniscient, all time and all
place.
I am infinite, eternal energy, coursing like swollen
rivers through the channels of creation.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXIV

I am not the quick-consuming—the sisal-grass and
the tinder. I am the molten craters of worlds,
burning as long as time.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXV

I do not measure to a day—I am of cyclic proportions.

My arteries are seas' coursings.

My breath is the winds blown over worlds.

My heartbeats are the swing of the pendulum that marks infinity's accretion and decay.

Races exist, and cease to exist, in a single suspiring of me.

Worlds are, and are no more, in a simple turn of my hand.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXVI

I am the primal things, form out of incohesion,
articulation out of inaccent.

I am the roll of a million years.

I come like the roaring winds, like pines moaning,
like great, snow-covered steppes, majestic and
awful.

I am the caught breath of the heights, uttering in
a voice big with vastness.

I deliver myself, I discharge the day.

I come to the forbidden edge.

I strap on the sheath of unfear and gird the strands
of daring about me.

It is I who must subdue the beasts by a look, and
command the potencies by a gesture.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXVII

I emancipate myself into the ranks of the significant,

I make a difference in the count and the weigh,

I augment the ranks of purpose,

I add depth to the hour

I am identified with great bridges, with high towers
and long tunnelings.

What I build I build with steam-shovels, with derricks and cranes.

I sink great pilings, and great walls arise.

I am the Significant One of great issues and enterprises.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXVIII

I am that wild thing that sweeps over the world like
the brown panthers of the wind.

My jaw is truculent and moist with a sense feeling.
I am scouring space for a flavor, for the taste of
a scented thing.

I am breast to breast with the great import;
Stepping the stride of the infinite intent;
Measuring myself against the utmost possibility.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXIX

I am the bloodhounds of reality. I have caught
the scent and my nostrils are mad.

I shall yet hold it in my iron teeth and hear it
crunch with the press of my iron jaw.

I shall tear it limb from limb.

I am the town of beast-men, the savagery of wild
desire. I come in insecurity and the endless
quest, into unconquered jungles and the cer-
tainty of danger.

I summon my forces and am on my way, ally to
my strength, fortified in the desire of me,
mortised in the yearning, girded by the great
unfear.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXX

I come with my rendered life.
I carry burdens: I lift mountains with a song.
I dig ditches—furrows to the moon and trenches
 to the Milky Way.
I level ages with my strength and brawn.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXI

Out of the red pain of life, I come singing the
white joy of being.

I come becarroled out of the crushings.

I find the triumph over moaning wheels.

Out of myself! Out of myself!—worlds, eons and
acts;

Realities, consummations;

Amplitudes and abundance.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXII

I am the stalwart life, robust with much living,
 spread with much containing.
I am fibrous with thought, and sinewy with feeling,
 grown big with contact.
I am a god grown tall, filled with adulthood.
Worlds ripen, time matures, and man arrives out
 of himself.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXIII

I am prolific with accomplishment, the doer of things, the accomplisher of days.

I come in the ecstasy of performance and fulfillment, fashioning from the vision, faithful to the potency and the portent.

I read the signs in the sky, and am on my way.

I hear the command, and do not falter.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXIV

- I am that ultramontane thing, that beyond-the-mountain feeling.
- I am that that is over the rim, beyond the yearning.
- I am the seeker, the questing, the endless unrest, the spirit-adventurer.
- I mark paths across virgin mains.
- I stalk the cormorant's scream to the white archipelagoes.
- I drive the Southern Remoteness, and come upon the nesting place of the black penguins of my soul.
- I bring you something new out of truth—a black feather from an ærie, a fledgling from a stony, proclivitous nest.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXV

I am the security.

The roots of ages are sunk deep in me.

God is mortised in my granite walls.

I am the clod that has taken wing,) the vapor that
has become a burning.

I am the conflagration sweeping down the tinder-
paths of the sky, the flame consuming.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXVI

I am the utterer, creation's spokesman.

I am the day uttering the light, the night uttering
the stars.

I am the tanager uttering its crimson, the spoken
breast of the peacock.

I am the stem uttering the roses, the ground utter-
ing the grasses, and the hills uttering the
trees.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXVII

I am the vats, the containers, the storage house of
the infinite supply.

I come in the power of me. I who tended a single
ash, am keeper of the forests.

I that minded a lone star, am minder of the firma-
ment.

I that kept the narrow path to my gate, am keeper
of the stretches of infinity.

I intensify life.

I compel grasses to utter out of sands.

I strike the rock with the command of me.

I slay the desert that stretches over life with its
sinister, hot-vapored meaning.

I pit the demand of me against the denial.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXVIII

I unsettle you.

I give you fitful startings in the night, outcries in
your dreams.

I am the goad.

I taunt you into darings.

I toss you into unfathomings.

I give you the sword with the two edges and send
you forth to win or lose by what you are.

I am the demand—no proffered halfness, no grim-
visaged defeat.

I grant you explorations, adventurings.

I grant you menace and the bloodshed of your
spirit, and the crucifixion at the end of the
way.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XXXIX

I am the established.

I am the roses that bloom, regardless of the sputtering.

I am the stars that shine unperturbedly.

I roll on like the years—nothing impedes me.

I shine like the sun, regardless of the day.

I am fixed, eternal. Events revolve around me.

They are the turning.

SONGS OF THE STRONG

XL

I am the seven league boots of being.
I take the measure of infinite stride.
I loose myself from circumscription, and set myself free into unrestricted movement and space.
I make a path for titans.
I blaze a way for gods.

SONGS OF HIM

I

I am world-free!

I drink the seas, I stalk the stars,

I step frozen Northern worlds.

I lie in my bare, brown skin under palmetto trees.

I am loosed out of me.

I shout my greetings to Him in space.

I halloo Him in the copper-colored sky.

I reach out my hands to grasp Him as the winds
sweep by.

I am world-free!

I deliver me from myself, I purchase release.

I pay with knowing and the endless insistence.

SONGS OF HIM

II

I come in the Great Impersonal, to show you the
way to the Great Personal;

I find God for you, that you may find yourself;

I bound the infinite, that you may take the measure
of finitism.

Stalking me to the stars, you will discover the
earth;

Following me to Him, you will come upon your-
self and your brother.

I do not bring you a pigmy's God—I am of world-
bigness and I bring you the Adequate One.

I do not defame Him by interpolation.

I do not discredit Him by a meager grasp.

SONGS OF HIM

III

I shout His name from the battlements of life.
I utter Him in words of angry granite.
I write Him in streaks of fire across the sky.
I moan Him in rumblings like a storm at sea.
I flaunt Him like the black skirts of the furies.
I scream Him like the winds beset.
I accent Him. I topple down great avalanches,
and cause great upheavals.

SONGS OF HIM

IV

I come calm in Him.

The serenity of His concept sits upon my brow.

I am the equipoise of His worlds, the evenness of
His pendulum.

I am the rhythm of His law, the meter of His
musical utterance.

I am His deep stillness,

His quiet dawn grey;

The lilt of His butterflies' wings,

The quiet pouring of His day.

SONGS OF HIM

V

I come in the majesty with which God endowed me:
In the grace He gave to the trees;
In the loveliness which He bestowed upon the
flowers;
In the rhythm of the singing winds and waters.
All their beauty and charm are mine.
I am more lovely than the day.
The grey, mist-mantled evening is not so seductive.
The blue of heaven is duplicated in my own soul.
The songs of the birds are in the high branches of
my being.
The sun shines warm and gold to meet that warm,
gold sun of me.
I am nature's concentrated loveliness, the epitome
of all her wealth, and bounty, and abundance.
There is no dearth of any wonderful thing in me.

SONGS OF HIM

VI

I am the gentleness of His hand, the kindness of His eye.

I am His tender contour, and the smile of His gentle lips.

I am His presence, like a heart-mist, and His strength, like woven faith-tendrils.

I am His compassion, like a mother's tears.

I am the great, enveloping care, the infusing affection.

I soften, I ease the glare, and smooth the sharpness of the angles.

I am the alembics. I cast in the grief that over lingered, I cast in your joy—and sometimes I cast in you.

SONGS OF HIM

VII

I set myself free into the blue-flowing sky,
I melt with the star-mist,
I am one with the moon's pourings.
I come limpid and easy to life,
Meeting its curves and its undulations, as the
shore-line meets the sea,
As the sky meets the indenture of the hills.

SONGS OF HIM

VIII

I measure life by my capacity to feel the fields,
To stand up to the hills,
To lay my hand in His.

I sound the deep-running things of God.
I sink the plummet of me deep into the fathoms of
His meaning.
I reach Him with the long arms of my yearning.

[56]

SONGS OF HIM

IX

I relax myself into the Great Tenderness.

The Great Heart folds me to its breast, in the
mother-arms of its all-pervading care.

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

I

I said I would face my prayers.

What was the secret thing I was praying with my
silent suspirings?

What was the furtive supplication, the thing I
pleaded offguard?

What was it I wanted, stripped of all subterfuge of
analysis and meaning?

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

II

I would know this thing that smiled in its waking
moments, and moaned in its sleep. I would
know the words of its somnolent uttering.

I would know why it tossed like a soul beset.

I would know its punishment, its denial.

I would know what it was that it accepted from the
day, and repudiated in its dream.

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

III

I prayed with my lips, but what was the thing that
I prayed with my heartbeats, with my silent
eyes?

What was the secret thing of my longing? What
was my fear? Why did I not call it by its
name?

Did I not trust this yearning creature of gold lace
and purple embroideries?

Did I fear her dream of magnificence?

Did I fear the touch of her ravishing, her gold
embrace?

Why did I not trust this one of the moonmesh hair?
God trusts His nights of silent, silver pourings,
and His dawns of blatant splendor.

He trusts His moons of molten gold, and His twi-
lights of streaming beauty.

Why do I not trust this glory-creature that is clam-
oring in me to be loosed, to be set free from
the grey and the ashen—

This paradise-bird-of-longing, this luxuriat of
denial, this beauty-thing denied to beauty?

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

IV

I will pray with the integrity of me, God, with the truth of me. If my sybarite soul moans, let me not lie.

Let me not come to you traducing its beauty-longings.

Let me not cripple its hands that reach to grasp the stars.

Let me not stifle it, God, this bride of moonbeams.

Let me not deny this inebriate of the fragrant twilight air.

Let me not traduce this beauty-lover, nor misrepresent it to you who know.

Let me bring it into alignment with your own beauty-frenzy that hung a wall of trailing arbutus against the sky, that banked long cliffs of purple shadows against the grey, gold-shot twilight.

Let me not come in ascetic denial, mocking your abundance, you who hung purple grapes in the vineyard, and scattered your prodigal soul like a wedding feast over the world.

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

V

- Let me come honestly, God, let me not dissemble.
If my heart is bleeding from the sting of coarse
 hemp and rōpen girdles, let me not misrep-
 resent.
- If I am mad with the sight of stars, and frenzied
 with the beauty of the silver, wanton moon;
- If I am stricken by the sight of your effulgence on
 rose gardens—
- Let me come honestly, God, let me not fear to
 declare.
- Let my soul feel no shame at its beauty-ravishment
 and longing.
- Let it accept this holy sense of splendor, and trust
 its grasping, eager hands.
- Let it remember you, the Fire-God of Splendor
 acclaim, and come in the magnificent burn-
 ing of me.

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

VI

I am the nun of the grey-mist veils, but I tell you
I am come in the outcries of my mighty color-
ing, calling to the God of Rescue that made
abalone shells, and sunsets over seas;
That made crimson poppies and glaring streaks of
red in the morning sky.
I am calling to Him in his knowing, this God of
Adjustment and Appear;e;
This God that uttered brown wrens, and then
turned, in the demand of His spirit, and
uttered flamingoes, and golden pheasants.
I appeal to this vindicating God that expressed
violet and oxeye, and then turned, in the
flaunt of His soul, and screamed out of His
being the utterance of an autumn forest.

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

VII

Once I was the brown wren, but I tell you this brown coat no longer represents me, for I am come in screaming colors. I have torn the brown song from my throat. My soul is beating down the grey day that restrains me.

I know His quickened breath, and the trembling of His fingers when He pressed into creation, out of drab soil, the iris and the tiger-lily.

I know the tingle of His soul when He pressed pink magnolias out of bare stems, and assembled fiery poinsettias out of the colorless earth and air.

PRAYERS OF A WORLDLING

VIII

Let me not lie, God. Let me not drape my soul in grey, and come to you with meekly folded hands, stultified by that which does not express.

Let my revolting hands tear off this quaker-array, and let me stand forth in the lurid rage of me.

Let me come naked under the sun, God, but let me not come white when my yearning is crimson. Let me not come in sandals when my feet are ravished by the consciousness of gold shoes.

Let me not come with lying, empty hands, I, who have come grasping at ecstasy, down inebrial ways.

SONGS OF LIFE- FREEDOM

I

I breathe freedom. I drink it in long, deep draughts.

I flank its current and turn it for my own inundating.

I have made channels for it, and reservoirs for its containing.

It is the answer to the drought of me, to the parched years, to the earth of me that was bare and sear.

It is the rain to the desert of me, and I have commanded the freshets, the overflow.

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

II

I am no longer bonded to a locality, the habitat of
a confine.

I free myself into world spaces.

Vastness is in my adventure.

I am a world-person, a sky-plainsman, a maker of
spirit trails.

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

III

Once I opened to the day,—now I open to eternity.
I had scope only for my garden,—now vastness
does not take the measure of me.
I had room only for my own,—now the concourses
of the earth march through me in a long file.
I am universal consciousness, risen out of myself,
projected into you and the multitudes of the
earth.

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

IV

I am walking fast, for I am walking far.

I swing out with a free, swift, rhythmic gait.

I am set to bound immeasurableness, to include the
height, and depth, and breadth of me.

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SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

V

I am the invisible currents of power coursing the universe.

I am the insistence of the seasons—nothing restrains me.

I come like the approach of spring—no hand withholds me.

No hand stays the roses, or holds back the spears of wheat.

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

VI

I play with elementals as with a toy.
Lightning is but a circlet of light about my throat.
Suns run in strands of gold about my white fore-head.
Earths are a flower-cliff of wild nasturtium.
Stars are but fireflies—I catch them in my playful hands.

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

VII

I claim that out of the wind that shouts me as it
rides by;

And that out of the hills that inflate me as I look
upon them.

I claim that out of the sky that distends me to
meet it;

And that out of the horizon that stings me with its
recedence. -

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

VIII

I ride the bridleless steeds. Their flying feet have wings.

We are lashed by a mighty spur. We achieve transcendency. We leap the crags of space.

We are the world's wild riders, the daring ones, the reckless ones, fearless and safe.

We are the Bedouins of being.

SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

IX

I said God's day was to the fleet—and I mounted
the winds.

I said God's seas were to seamen--and I mounted
the wild, sea mares that tossed foam of flame
from their nostrils.

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SONGS OF LIFE-FREEDOM

X

I ride the wind with the brown mane and the fiery nostrils.

I ride the wild horses of the world, the unreined forces.

I leap their bare backs, and direct them.

We are the fleet coursers, outbreasting the ages and immensity.

Time recedes, and we are neck and neck with tomorrow. We are gaited to life's unendingness.

A SOUL'S FARING

I

If one could but arrive at a normal expression, how infinitely one could trust it. But life the beauteous is compelled into a distortion; life the human is made a beast.

One does not represent—he misrepresents.

One does not express—he is a malexpression.

But I will prove salvation. I will save myself. I will rescue the outcast of me. I will be saved by the brotherhood in my own breast.

I will rise above this personal damnation, into the divine, impersonal infinitude that I am.

I will rescue my life from ultimates. I defy the finals that are staring me in the face.

I extricate myself from the past and the threat of the future.

A SOUL'S FARING

II

Somewhere in me there has been confusion of identity. I do not know my own name. I do not know if I am marshglow or wormwort, daffodil or purslane.

Once I thought maybe it was lily, or rose, or starmist.

I have lost the words of the grasses and the friendliness of the trees. The leaves do not speak to me. The birds do not call my name.

I have lost the plains and the feel of world spaces.

I have lost God. Have I lost the antennæ by which I can feel my way back to Him?

A SOUL'S FARING

III

I moan with the pain of my thoughts, remembering
how I might have blossomed as stars.

I might have brushed the very gates of heaven in
my flight, but I flew low over moors and
morasses, and the poisoned everglades of
being.

But I am the militant of life. I come with clenched
spiritual fists, screaming my protest to the
Creative Force, seeking the interpretation,
straining to translate, to grasp the elusive
meaning of me.

Mine is no facile accouchement. It is in the moan-
ing of the spirit. But I shall not mind that I
am racked and torn if something new may be
born out of the depths to supersede this mon-
ster.

A SOUL'S FARING

IV

I know by the hunger that eats at my heart that there is a fulfilling answer. I know by the great misery of life that there must be its antithesis—a great joy. I am come with a craving as deep as worlds.

I am a wolf that sits back on its haunches in the night, at the edge of the wilderness, and wails, —a cry for its own that is unanswered. Maybe I am a wolf-dog. Maybe the wolf in me wails, and the dog in me answers with a moan, rent by contending forces.

A SOUL'S FARING

V

Beautiful world! I see you. One day I shall comprehend you. When life comes by in trappings and state, I shall no longer be the beggar at the gate. I shall be the lord that receives you.

Wondrous life! And we allow it to become so marred. We maim it in its young limbs, and render it unpliant in its lithe soul.

How life would touch us with fond caress, and our cold hands but chill her.

We shout at her. It may be if we would whisper she would hear. Her soul is not attuned to raucous sound.

A SOUL'S FARING

VI

Life is beautiful, only we haven't known how to keep it radiant and rosy-cheeked and lovely. We have allowed it to become sickly, with green and ashen hue.

We do not know how to accept life. There is the Gracious Giver, the gracious gift, and the gracious receiver. We have not grace to receive, nor grace to contain. Clumsy of soul, we do not know how to open our hearts like the flowers that receive the dew, nor lean like the leaves when the breeze would kiss them. There are dawns to which we never open, and singing winds to which our breasts are dumb. There are rare places of the soul, but we never go with urge and fleetness.

A SOUL'S FARING

VII

I shall yet come to accept life for the thing I have pronounced it to be.

Life is dragging, but I shall yet lift it up, I shall carry it aloft buoyantly. I shall no longer bear this weight on my back, this weight of my own accretion, these meaningless tons of myself, stooped and leaden-footed, old without age or wisdom.

Truth is light of foot like a fawn, not heavy like lead. It is young with the spirit of youth, but we bend it with weight in its still young years.

A SOUL'S FARING

VIII

And there are myriads more who have lost the look
of peace and wear the tensed look of fear and
misgiving, who trail their heavy lives as a
convict drags his ball and chain, wearing the
grey prison pallor, and looking away with
lusterless, longing eyes to the green fields of
being.

Can one deal with realities that are not shaken with
sobs and wet with tears?

Sorrow is beautiful, but what if it is menace?

One can glorify pain, but what if it is a mistaken
endurance?

A SOUL'S FARING

IX

I cannot evade or ignore the unanswering. It prods me like a sharp steel. My soul will not accept indifference. I have but one life to live that I know of, and that must yet come to me that will lift me up, and out, and over, and beyond, away from myself of limitations, into my better, bigger self, and lofty spaces.

What avail to bear great loads of life, if one comes only to believe that every back in the world is bent from its burden?

What avail the stalwart soul, if there are only anemic conquests?

A SOUL'S FARING

X

I will write it all over my life "Risen again!"
I form a new alliance with the Militant God of
Survival.
God has been cheated, I have been cheated, and
life has been traduced.
I will stand with the past beneath my feet.

A SOUL'S FARING

XI

I will let God flow unimpeded through me. Unimpeded through me! A channel choked with a lifetime of debris, of wrecked and broken years, tangled hours and intentions. Not room for God, not room for me!

I will clear away all impediment that hinders the free-flowing of God in my life. He shall be as unrestricted rivers.

What have I interposed between God and myself?

I will tear it down as I would tear down a wall between me and the sun. No thing has reason for being that stands between me and Him. I will not embrace that which I cannot lay at His feet, which I cannot bring to His door for admittance, no matter how formidable may be its dispersing, no matter how fatal.

A SOUL'S FARING

XII

I was meant to be woman-the-joyous, but I carry
in my heart a thousand centuries of pain.

I was meant to be woman-the-radiant, but my eyes
tell a world-old story.

I was born to be glad. That thing has no sacred-
ness, and I owe it no respect, that leaves me
leaden, and heavy, and old.

There is time for gladness, there is reason for
joy, and I mean to discover them.

Life is not by this struggle to death, rather than
to life, this annihilating that should be an
establishing.

This destruction that we permit through our own
unenlightenment, this gnarled and knotted be-
ing, this life bound to its pack, is not of God.
It is of you, or it is of me. God gave us time
to live, but we have so distorted it that we
have only time to perish.

XIII

Labor is saving, but drudgery has damned my soul, the task without the illumination. It eats at life. It devours the vitals. It leaves one insensate, save to weariness. What will it bring that will atone for that which it takes away? Where are the buoyancy and resilience? There are only the sodden, yellow-white features of drivenness, of eternal hurrying.

My hands are hard, but my soul is still in bondage. If the breaking of the body availed anything, that would be its justification, but it avails nothing. That is the rebuke of it.

I will work in the calm application of my soul, and I shall see mountains give way, and seas turned in their course.

I will be about my real task, that work that is a privilege, not an infliction, not a penance,—the work that I love, and the work that loves me!

A SOUL'S FARING

XIV

I will demand of myself those things that take the measure of my possibilities.

Too long I have been chimney-sweep of life, when I might have been sweeping the stardust of Heaven.

If one becomes the expression of one's dominant thought, have I thought dish-water or dew, scullery pans or roses? Do I abide by my kitchens, or by my fields? Do I think my narrow human life, or do I sometimes think God?

A SOUL'S FARING

XV

Am I the victim of misplaced zeal, of misdirected force and energy? I dig and sweat in the furrows, when there are sky-furrows awaiting the kiss of my plow's bright steel. There is the sowing of the seed of life and eternity. There is possibility of star-harvest, of garner of glory and gleam.

I have been the self-appointed scullion of the world, washing the pots and pans of the universe. If it were the limit that I could do, then would it be my divine task. But it is not the limit, and therein lies the inexcusableness and shame.

I have gone courageously to my alien task, but there is one in me that weeps. I have assented to all the denial of the way, but that one lifts up her insurgent head. I have said "Yes," but I have seen her eyes flash fire as she answered "Never!"

A SOUL'S FARING

XVI

Am I afraid to be beautiful? Afraid to claim
grace as my own?
I will take away the look of ashes, and restore the
look of dawn.

A SOUL'S FARING

XVII

What if I have done everything but the one thing?

What if I have worked all around it? It may be I have built houses and caused fields to grow, when mine was to build a feldspar cabin. That was my peculiar task. And not until I build my feldspar cabin! Not until that hour! Not until then!

I have minded spigots, when it was mine to tend the seas.

I have put my arms around the finite, when it was mine to reach out with my long embrace and include the infinite everything.

A SOUL'S FARING

XVIII

I have erred so unremittingly in my fallacious conception of utility. I will look upon the rose gardens whose use is beauty. Utilities? Did I not know that roses were of the utilities of life?

I knew that I must plant my fields to save my body, but did I not know that I must plant my rose gardens to save my soul?

Shall I stitch and stitch that my flesh may be covered, and leave no time for the weaving of fabric for my shivering spirit?

Shall I supply the fuel of my flesh, and allow my soul's fires to be extinguished?

Is it more vital that I eat than that I have ecstasy?
Shall I not more surely perish from lack of rapture than from lack of bread?

A SOUL'S FARING

XIX

Do I not know that beauty is all-healing? That a breath of lavender will restore me? That one hyacinth pressed to my breast will renew the flesh and the faith?

I will come with great draughts of remedy for my spirit! Turn on the roses! Turn on the mignonette! Open the spigots of the trumpet-flowers! Draw from the azalea! Divert the poppy-streams to me, and the flow of the locust's exotic breath, for I am body-ill from the endless flow of life's drab-grey!

Tap the reservoirs of the tuberoses! Bind up my spirit with their efflorescence, for my body's sake!

Bathe me! Inundate me! Baptize me! Let me be renewed!

I need not unguent but joy! For the healing of my body let my soul swoon!

A SOUL'S FARING

XX

I have set out to grow in possessions—the possession of myself. One day I shall count my holdings, and they will include me, big, round, significant me.

I will make a new institution of being, the institution of loyalty to myself, and the God whose instrument I am.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXI

The things that are young and fresh and buoyant,
where are they?

Did I not use to sing at morn? Had I not gladness
to greet the day? Where did I lay them
down, and is it too far to go back? Too far
to return to the spirit of youth and the young
things of joy?

I am the dry bed of a stream. Where are the
water and the verdure, the green hanging
banks? The dipping willows, where are they
for me? By what process am I dry, and
bare, and vacant? How have I drained the
waters and dried up the green?

I am drained dry by the huge, blood-sucking ten-
tacles of being, but I shall yet be restored to
the font of the juices of life. I have a right
to be watered abundantly. I have a right to
be green and living.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXII

I am the starved hound of being, following an
endless trail, day upon day spent in coursing,
night upon night exhausted by the chase.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXIII

One day I shall have the feeling that I have arrived, after many wandering, alien years. I shall reach that point in life where Life will not resist, but will acquiesce, will wish to be for me, will respond to my touch and my yearning, will be friendly and pleased. I shall no longer be stranger, but kin, and she will be glad of me. She will open her gates and let me in.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXIV

I will release all the confined forces of my soul
and apply them directly to that which I may
be.

I will release all my thousand possibilities and
send them broadside against life.

No more shall the performance know the unfaith.
No longer shall the structure know the un-
certain hand.

My life shall possess me. I shall come mad as the
Mullah about it.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXV

One day I shall command the fertility that will
cover all the waste places.

I of the great dearth will come with the great full-
ness.

My soul is prolific; let it press on, changing water
into wine, and the bare stem of me into the
blossoming rod of Aaron.

XXVI

I tried to sweat my life into beauty, and then one day I thought I would sit me down in the furrows. I would stop the wheels long enough to enlist God. I would stop the mad rush that hour, that moment, and sit me down and pray.

I would come with tranquillity, with repose of the flesh, with the institution of easement and peace. I would come with the thought, the thrill, that would make dead eyes quiver and dead flesh start. I would lift with my yearning that which I could not lift with my arms. The potency of my prayer would be mightier than brawn and swifter than feet. I had trudged—now I would sit me down and pray for the chariot out of the sky.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXVII

The arid country! I look out over the sagebrush plain, panting and parched, and sense its long thirst for the rain. I wonder if its heart breaks because the streams of life are parched and dry, that no cooling shade fosters, and no succulent green saves? Does its soul stifle when the hot winds blow and the burning sands beat down?

Is its throat cracked and aching in the alkali heat? Does it know a yearning as deep as death for the sound of a purling stream?

XXVIII

To come always with wistful longing to possess life, to fold her to my breast, to feel her kiss and her warm breath, to hear her say "My lover has come!"

She will yet open her arms to receive me. She will come as a lover to my burning lips, and speak in love's language.

I shall measure to her stature and her yearning.
I shall know that I am loved and wanted.

XXIX

My garden shall yet hang heavy with tardy bloom.
I shall pluck the fig in its late ripeness. The sumac will crimson for me in the frost of the fall. I shall gather wild grapes in their em-purpling, and come with wild hops torn from the tops of frost-touched trees.
I shall gather myself in great, ripe, yellow sheaves of me, in great clusters of maturity.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXX

I work to free myself, but I know how much more
that is than to free myself. I cannot adjust
my own life without adjusting the harmonies
of the universe. When I have grasped the
endless rhythm, I have also opened it to end-
less appropriation.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXI

I know by my outer imperfection how incomplete
I am within. I look upon the desert of me,
and yet expect life not to have such vasty
barren places.

I am incoherent,—and that that is mine is unas-
sembled bits of life. I possess only a fraction
of life because I possess only a fraction of
myself.

One day I shall come in entirety—maybe the en-
tirety will redeem the parts. I shall come in
the aggregate of me, and maybe that that has
not had seeming relativity will show sequence.

I demand that life assemble, that it command itself
out of atoms, that it come full-formed, articu-
late, accented of being.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXII

If I can but establish the truth of me!

I go in conquest up and down the earth, when I
must know that the thing must be wrested out
of my own soul.

I go here and there, giving accent to this and to
that, when it is the unspoken, inarticulate I
that is the torment. It is I struggling to tear
myself from the folds and the coverings.

The answer is in me, or it is nowhere. I do not
come asking you. I ask only myself. If it
were in you, you could not impart it to me. I
could not understand your words.

I must bring the answer and the interpretation out
of me. Until then I must go unanswered.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXIII

I will become too big for unmeaning things. I
will unfetter me from abnormal desires. I
will be freed into a comprehension of sim-
plicity.

I will accord my life to a few simple elements.

Once more I will be a pine standing tall and
straight on the side of a hill, with the stars
twinkling through my branches, and not a
pine reset from its native soil, hung with
tinsel baubles and colored lights.

I will cast off the folds and layers of intricacy and
confusion, and come forth in my naked life
and soul. I shall come humbled at last, a
radiant thing in illumined bareness.

I will emerge from the maze of being and come
forth under the open sky.

I who have had the fireflies will have the stars.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXIV

I am seeking me, and what if I find you, my universal brother!

I ask no thing for myself in which you are not included. When I pray for me, it is for the dual me, you and me. When I work, it is for both of us. I may seem to be doing the thing for myself, but I am doing it for all who can realize the thrill of attainment, of action and mastery.

I do not come with alms, but with aims, with performance, with the benefaction of a wrought life.

I, the restorer of myself, am not unconscious of the perishing multitude. For you and for me my dumb soul finds its voice. I speak the living word to my own listening—and your soul hears. I come proving me—and refute your doubts of you.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXV

I who am vapor and dust will organize into a world.

I will drag this human of me up to the god-plane of me, and it shall function as a deity.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXVI

Life came past my door and I did not know how
to greet it. I came clumsily, all too eager,
like a starved bird in the snow. I wanted to
come gently. I wanted to touch it lightly, like
one touches the breast of a dove.

It is one's hungry soul that commits absurdities.
It comes always stretching its yellow beak like
a starved fledgling.

One day I shall be fed, and warm, and human. I
shall be restored to myself.

I shall come into a conscious sense of life, thrilling
at its contact, quivering at the touch of its
breath.

I shall feel it deep down in the nerve centers of my
bones. I shall taste it. I shall feed upon it.
I shall feel it like the sting of bees.

I shall know the sweet, moist flavor of me.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXVII

The transient passes me with the hour, but the fixed things are with my approval. Nothing becomes an institution that I do not permit it. Nothing stays that is not tolerated. The thing that stays does so because it is made welcome. It is I who deny it, or I who give it countenance.

I may find myself in the midst of the cackle of fishwives, or in the circle of the red lives of whores, but it is my impotent feet that do not depart.

I may pass through many strange lands in my journeys, but it is I who pitch my tent.

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXVIII

It is not sin that I must overcome—it is incompleteness.

I will yet do that that gives new curve to my lips,
that leaves its reflection in my hands and in
my carriage, that announces itself in the
quality of my voice, that writes itself all over
me unmistakably.

I will come with directness and virility, with that
of which there can be no doubt,—no longer
with halfness, no longer with feeble intent.

My offense against life is inarticulation, inaccent.
Never to have spoken out round and clear!
Never to have struck one, round full note!

A SOUL'S FARING

XXXIX

I am the walled-in sea. One day I shall break the mountain of rock that restrains me. I shall beat against the cliffs until they crumble under the insistence of me.

I shall come in the might of unspent force, in the sweep of mighty assertion, for time, and for the eternity that was denied me.

My surge shall be as the voice of angry peoples.

My spray shall reach the sky in protest. The cormorants will scream in fear of the wrath of me.

I shall not release me into a narrow freedom. It shall be as copious as has been the denial, as endless as the unfilled yearning of me, as unbroken as the bonded years.

A SOUL'S FARING

XL

I shall know the long road that stretches like a grey highway in space.

I shall be unfurled to the paths that undulate to my listing.

I shall know the release. I shall be unbound to the day.

My soul in its prison-grey will come forth in the flush of colorful life. It will shed its grey cloak, like a pall. It will bury its dead and disperse the funeral from out its consciousness.

I will not die of four walls while there is breath in the hills. My misery is born under a roof, but it shall perish in the fields.

A SOUL'S FARING

XLI

I will hang festoons of worlds across the arch of
the sky.
I will come with God's big plan of things, with
spawn of time, with seed of eternity.
I will live the free-hand life—I will rise up at
dawn, and with sure, unfaltering faith, create
the day.
I will come at noon, and with the assurance of a
master, paint the heavens.
I will come at night, and with the confidence of
one who cannot fail, hang a million stars in
the sky.
You will look at my life and know that a master-
hand has builded.

A SOUL'S FARING

XLII

I will have the feel of abundance in my life, if it
is only an abundance of sunshine and leaves
and grasses.

The look of poverty and woe is not an outer con-
dition that I put on like a garment, but an
inner condition that I exude with my breath.

I will come like roses in their prolific season, like
cherry blossoms in May, like fields where
countless daisies grow.

I will come with the prodigal profusion of life,
like a hawthorn copse, or an orchard of
peach-blow; like a bank of sweetbrier, or a
cliffside of wild nasturtium.

I will scatter myself over the earth, life's caster
of seed.

I will flow through the fluid channels like a stream.
I am the alluvium, the overflow. I come to
enrich wastes. That that was barren in the
back-beyond-time I vegetate.

A SOUL'S FARING

XLIII

I fertilize great, barren wastes of me into a yielding abundance.

I reset the stakes of my courage. I incorporate great untraveled areas.

Today I am the shepherd minding the sheep, but tomorrow mine shall be the cattle on a thousand hills of my spirit.

I who have lived and died of yearning shall be delivered.

I who have been of feeble stroke will come with unmistakable beat.

A SOUL'S FARING

XLIV

I shall realize life in great throes of being. I shall
feel worlds born within me.

I shall know the bursting of craters, and great up-
heavals like mountains heaved up out of the
sea.

I shall know the great elation, the rising like swell-
ing tides; that life is bursting—the dykes give
way; the ecstasy of an escaping ocean.

I shall know the big thrills, like torn precipices,
like gashes rent in the earth, like avalanches
toppling.

I who have been so cramped and small, without
room to breathe or be,—and the world such
a big, big world, but my assertive power so
small!

A SOUL'S FARING

XLV

The myriad things that are mine, had I but the capacity to contain them. Wherein have I made room for the firmament, for forests and hills, for the flood and recession of seas? Where room for humanity's coursing? Where my farflung space for horizons? Where my comprehension, my vast inclusiveness?

The paucity of life is not in the things, but in me. Where in all my life have I room for a friend? For the stature of an hour? Room for the events that transpire? For the pulsings of night and day?

The meagerness is in my own being, in my own incapacity to open and receive. Life is rich and abundant—I am the sparsity.

How small has been my concept! When have I seen where time spawns, where stars fructify, where eternities lie in swaddling garments?

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A SOUL'S FARING

XLVI

Have I expanded to meet the hills? What has the out-of-doors meant to me? Something to be glimpsed through a window? Something remote? Was it not mine to open to it, to walk straight into it?

When have I walked out into the limitlessness and taken the long leads that led to everywhere? —I, confined by narrow tasks and performances. Why did I not take them out where I could get the big perspective on them, align them with distance?

There is such prodigality in the abundance and room of Nature, and such meagerness of supply and space in me. Where are my long lanes of daisies, my long banks of rue?

A SOUL'S FARING

XLVII

Where is my lavish counting? When have I spread great areas of green dotted with gold? When have I come sprinkling hillsides with a violet fragrance? Where is my prodigal hand, I so mean and measured, doling life grudgingly? Where is the God of profusion in me that spreads whole valleys of hawthorn bloom? That hangs a million wild roses over an embankment to show His scale of computing? That flings a million primroses from the sky, and scorns to count the arbutus? Where is my outpouring soul? When did I come ravishing life with a wild riot of bloom? When did I come with easy luxuriance?—I entered into voluntary decrepitude.

A prodigal God smiles at the paucity of my beggar life!

A SOUL'S FARING

XLVIII

Life is bare because we never plant it with seed.

We never till its long rows, never come with
husbandry of spirit.

If I wanted to sail the high seas, why did I not
build a sea-going life?

I wanted the scream of the petrel in the storm, yet
where was that in me that did not fear being
lashed to a mast?

I lay hawsered to a fear, yet complained that I
did not have the experiences that come to
courage and daring.

A SOUL'S FARING

XLIX

If I might bring one orchid out of my soul, one
frail narcissus, one hair fern!

If I might bring out of its sensitized soil one tinted
petal, one delicate tendril, one gossamer
tracery of leaf!

What in all my striving days do I bring forth like
the grace of a single wilding rose? Or like
syringa that grows rank with beauty and life,
without strife or strain?

Shall I ever bring forth on the stalk of my life one
thing that will not be shamed by the salvia?

Shall I ever have a single hour like the burst of
God's unnumbered dawns of day?

Shall I ever bring forth in all the years of my
barren being like the verdure that grows with
ease on the sides of high hills?

A SOUL'S FARING

L

I have set out, not to surpass you, but to add cubits to my own strength, to go beyond my present cognizance, to come upon a new me; to uncover the things that have long threatened in the burning of me; to open to the things that have long beat with their insistence at my door.

I do not wish to surpass anyone or anything. I pray only to outgrow myself in emancipation and consciousness.

I stipulate nothing, save that I grow. Not this thing must be dragged along, nor that thing carried on the way. I know the price and I will pay. I do not ask that my heart shall not break. I do not ask that another may not mourn. I ask only that I grow, and I accept all on that basis.

How can I offend here on that much ~~which~~
that here the ~~million~~ - the last stand
Because I have taken the place of others
The elasticity of the common place
me - I shall not let her
To whom all my efforts
just about a fresh
in the night before
May stand here
that the ~~knows~~
of Berry

A SOUL'S FARING

LI

I have admitted all the outcast, the downtrodden,
the underfoot. One day I shall be able to
admit the snob, the blueblood, the aristocrat,
and all the pretenders in the world.

A SOUL'S FARING

LII

Why mind your scorn?—I scorn myself.

Maybe I am approaching a little nearer if you look
at me and condemn, and I look upon your
condemnation with indifference.

Maybe I am coming somewhat into possession if I
am no longer concerned with your attitude or
mood. If I am not distracted by hissings,
there is hope that I would not be by plaudits.

Why ask your acceptance, when I have never had
my own? Your approval might mean not
much, while mine would mean consciousness
of growth, of effacement and eradication. It
would mean victorious struggle and conquest.
It would mean overcoming, consciousness of
transcendency. It would mean things at-
tained, and things crushed beneath my feet.

Your acceptance might come lightly with its touch
and go, but mine would be as the rolling of
time, as ponderous unfurlments, as prophe-
cies fulfilled.

A SOUL'S FARING

LIII

If I would but respond to life! How she presents
herself in a thousand phases, and I sit un-
moved, like some defective staring into space.
How she would entice me, how she would ravish,
how she would enthral, were I not dead in the
nerve-centers of my soul.

Life does not die, but I do. The fields are pulsing,
the hills are alive. It is I who am insensate.
The beat of life stops within me, and I think
the world is dead.

The world is enticing, and beautiful, and warm,
and welcoming, and soft—it is only I that am
frozen at the heart.

A SOUL'S FARING

LIV

Shall the puritan of me require that I don my
purple mantles?

Shall the ploughboy demand that the prince capitul-
late?

Shall God's white-eyed daisies decry His gorgeous
dawns of day?

Shall the marshglow denounce the concourse of
stars?

A SOUL'S FARING

LV

I will come deliberately to the day. I will stand and look a long time upon it, with no sign of unease.

I will be confidently about it. I will come to it tranquilly poised, with the utmost composure. I will approach it possessed of myself—it shall not disconcert me.

There is no haste and no hurry. There is only deliberateness of action.

My soul shall come quietly forth in its God-assurance and procedure, complacent, unper-turbed, with slow, sure step, calmly to the morning and to the setting sun, quietly into action, softly like falling leaves, like envelop-ing vapors.

[130]

A SOUL'S FARING

LVI

The nightingales came to my window and I did not heed. Now they have flown away into the deep wood, and that is why I am here in the deep wood of my life, looking for my lost birds that sing.

I was insensate to the roses. Then one day the winter was upon me, and I came frantically imploring my June, my lost opportunity to comprehend.

I will take a little more time out of life to live—one hour for the dawn, and one for the evening, and one for the singing fields; one rose hour for the gardens, and one to set my feet on the crest of hills.

Against the glitter of dew and the light of stars, the feel of the hills and the call of the meadows, I will measure my petty day. I will put these into the scale against the endless round. I will compute. I will know wherein lie values.

A SOUL'S FARING

LVII

Days upon days shall be cast into the incinerator.

I shall destroy the unmeaning and the unmeant. I shall render them to ash, to white, harmless ash and a memory.

I shall have real issues to confront. There shall be happenings in my days. Things shall come to pass. There shall be conflicts and decisions. There shall be loves and hates and burnings.

Life diverse! Its divergent realities! I shall have the experiences of beauty, and the experiences of love, and the experiences of strength. I shall have that that can come to me only through the grace of my body, and that that can come to me only through the warmth of my breast, and that that comes through the granite pillars of me.

I shall have incantations, and lullabies, and martial music.

A SOUL'S FARING

LVIII

So much there is in life that is excrement, that is effete. I will cleanse the channels of their putridity, the arteries of their fever. I will cause cleansing waters to pour and cool winds to blow.

I will bring the health of simplicity to my burdened soul and days.

I will leave this hall of dead bones, and come to my bare, board table, with its flavor of God. I will scourge the money-changers out of the temples of my life.

I will drive the hosts from out my soul that have come with camp and flocks and pitched their tents. I will drive them beyond the border of my consciousness, with only dead campfires to remind me, and the outgoing marks of feet.

A SOUL'S FARING

LIX

How can I interpret inaudible directions? How
can my soul hear in the clamoring and the
din?

I have wanted the soft music of evening shadows,
but there is a hurdy-gurdy playing in my
days.

I have wanted the soft echoes of pipes from the
hills, but there is a rasping trumpet sounding.

I have come blatantly, beating the gongs of life.

One day I shall come quietly, in the humility
of my great and wondrous soul. I who have
beaten only tom-toms shall come thrumming
the sweet lyre of being.

A SOUL'S FARING

LX

I cannot dream beauty and express ugliness,—the concept of roses must bring forth radiance.

The consciousness of the light imprisoned in pearls must bring forth a colorful, dancing vibrance.

The inner rapture, like the fine gold feeling of the Nebulæ, must express itself in stars.

I who think beauty must come with it exuding from me like a fragrant nimbus.

If I conceive beauty, I must walk in loveliness.

If I conceive twilights, I must manifest in threnodies, and the jasmine's breath, with a silver, moonswept sheen.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXI

Again and again we cry "I can bear no more!"—
that is the human of us. And again and again
we bear more,—that is the god of us.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXII

One day the hour will strike; it will call to me to arise, and what if my unused limbs shall fail me?

It will call to the swift and the fleet, to him of used and practised strength, but how shall I respond, I so cramped and complaining through the years?

A SOUL'S FARING

LXIII

Action!—that one stupendous word I will translate into my soul.

My days shall be peopled. There shall be runnings to and fro, and chatterings. There shall be pistons sounding, and the whirr of wheels. There shall be busy days' endings, with reckonings and summings-up.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXIV

- To accouche a thought, to give birth to an era or
mark a time, to leave one's footprints on a
century!
- To put a new circle around life, to add a new coun-
try, or a new hill, or a new tree!
- To be an explorer of life, and come with news from
the far zone of the soul, with a new hope, a
new peace, a new joy, a new meaning!
- To plant a standard on a hill, to leave a record
buried under a rock!

A SOUL'S FARING

LXV

Let Life show the ship I have built, the hill I have
leveled, the new boundary I set upon the
plain, the new cubit I added to truth. Let
these show in the fiber of me, in my face and
manner.

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A SOUL'S FARING

LXVI

There was a time when life had the look of a smooth, unbroken, virgin prairie, the look of a slim girl, but now it has the deep lines of life, of child-bearing, of much parturition. It is heavy and seamed with living, like soil with the marks of the share. It has the look of much bringing forth, the mother-look of much brooding and attendant care. It is no longer youth with the maiden look in its eyes—it is maturity bearing its pack.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXVII

Do I forget how to be glad, how to feel the sun and the grasses, how to romp with the winds and laugh with the trees? Do I comprehend the rejoicing hills and admit them? Does the clamoring sky find friend in me?

I come heavy, like barnacled ships. No longer lithe and light, but with the sediment of life set in. No longer doing the graceful thing, but heavy and obese.

I will leave it there where it pulled me down, the heavy accretion of the years. I will renew the instinct that once would have soared, that would have winged its way to the sky.

Once more I will come fine and thin, attenuated.

I will come faintly touching the tips of flowers. Life that has become hard as tendons shall be restored to its gauze and its filament. The iron woman shall be restored to the filigree silver.

Life that is grained in granite shall be softened.

I am an antidote even to myself. I will ameliorate.

A SOUL'S FARING

I will hang lush grasses all over the bare rocks.

They shall be fringed with a green entwining
and bordered with bloom.

I will spread a shade and a coolness where now
the sun beats down.

I will walk in the shadowy softness, like a mantle
of mist overspreading.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXVIII

What if life came by with freedom, and I knew
not how to take it?—I, habituated to bondage,
the eagle chained to the rock, and when the
chain was slipped, with no impulse to soar.

What if she slipped the thongs and let my burden
fall from me, and yet I did not move on? I
had lost the use of buoyant feet. My bur-
dened back no longer knew response or
resilience.

What life would need to bring to me with her gift
of freedom, would be a new sense of freedom
for the one that had atrophied. I, the little,
mean, habituated slave to a condition,
weighted down like divers who go down to
sea.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXIX

I try to grasp the infinite, when I have never
grasped the hour.

I want heaven, and I have never laid hold of the
earth.

I try to reach God, when I have never reached man.
Today goes unperformed, yet I demand an infinity
of years.

I will not ask of the resurrection after death. I
am concerned with the resurrection in life. I
who am buried in the tomb of today want the
assurance of the ascension tomorrow. I do
not ask if I shall live then—I am not sure that
I live now.

I do not want a beautiful theory that will make my
going sweet. I want a beautiful fact that will
sweeten my stay.

What's a clear
soul -
What's this [145]
vision of reality you
have

A SOUL'S FARING

LXX

I will register my way through life in color, or
in song, or maybe in chiseled marble, or
pounded brass. By these things you shall
know me. You shall know how it is with my
soul.

[146]

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXI

- { To be willing to be nothing.
To do the work, and erase the workman.
To paint the picture, and remove the palettes and
myself.
To build a temple, and be willing to be the bearer
of the chalice, the keeper of the vestry, the
swayer of the burning myrrh.
To build me a lofty spire to the sky, not in
pride but in all humility. It shall touch the
heavens, while I, its humble builder, kneel
lowly on its stone steps to pray.

Lowly -

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXII

There is a river fringed with willows, a little river, flowing ever through my days. Its source is back there in the youth-time, when it wore its ineffaceable channel, when it imprinted its old mill, its covered bridge and its seven hills, until it is like fossil tracery of fern on rock, these pictures of its sand-bar, its wooden dam and its stone abutment.

I still wade there barefoot in my river. I still drift on my river in long hours of recall. I am still a young, slim youth-thing, and not this world-worn one dreaming back to a time.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXIII

Life might have grown flowers and vines in the beginning, but now I must grow them to cover the fissures and the rents.

I must grow forests on my hills to cover the upheaved rock, and deep verdure in my valleys, to cover the bed of my dead sea.

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A SOUL'S FARING

LXXIV

My life shall no longer be locust blossoms that have never hung exotic, nor roses that have never come out of their latency.

Its lilies shall unfold on their long stems, and its violets grasp their purple souls out of the soil. Its poinsettias shall assemble their crimson beings out of the earth and the elements.

My life that is many things that are unformed, uncreate, atomic, shall have coherence.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXV

I said I was living life, but I was misliving it.

What I called life was death. I was putting
the grave-clothes on everything worth while.

Knowing that the thing I live is not life, but death;
not truth, but falsity; not nature, but distor-
tion; will I rise up and do the thing, or am I
but one more coward of being?

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXVI

Let my soul awake, though it follow that all that
makes life today is but part of the dream.
What a small price to pay for verity!

(I will accept truth, though it mean that every pres-
ent reality must pass as a chimera.

[152]

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXVII

Have I the courage of my prayers?
I pray for a thing, but if it came, am I sure I
should have the fortitude to accept it? Have
I the capacity to accept truth? We pray, and
have not the courage to accept the answer to
our prayers—and still we pray.

We invite a thing to depart, and then nail it down
for fear it will. We pray for our misery to
go, and when it gets up to do so, we go over
and lock the door. We cry for freedom, and
we cry harder when we get it.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXVIII

We have not the courage of the sundering, the
fortitude of consummation.

(It is not to know what to do, but strength to do it,)
knowing.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXIX

I should believe in myself if God Himself faltered
in belief of me.

I should remember the time when the thing I
wrought refused to be, and I should know
how He felt when He looked despairingly
upon me, a world that would not cohere, frag-
ments that would not assemble, a meaning
that refused to manifest.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXX

Deliverance! It is something we see when we turn
in our sleep, in our restless dream.

If one could but understand that one's crucifixion
is the way of one's ascension, but it is so slow
a process and one is crushed under the weight
of its seeming unmeaning.

How could I know when I was buried in the tomb,
that the stone would roll away?

Becoming is not
emergent concern the form -
I move - from the condition
remembered by the power of own
and yet I know no less

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXI

The things that are etched upon my life—acid on
copperplate! . . .

To know the disillusionments of life, and to come
enchanted still.

(To break all its glass balls, and then to find that
life did not lie in the glass balls.)

To have all my idols shattered, and then to find
God in the earth at their base.

The usage of life held yesterday
Today death and
of shelter all outlining
and venture beyond the high
water mark into the
depth of forever shadow
[157] ^{the} ^{as} I
knowing I feel as I
go -

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXII

I will fulfill my wildest dream of receptivity of life.

I will trust the thing which I involuntarily am, and one day it shall be verified and confirmed.

I will find new currents in me of untried force and velocity.

I will be lusty and virile, that the thing I do may be strong in the mesh.

I am the great distributor, the great dispenser, in their exalted meaning.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXIII

Life may take everything out of my days, but the
real things remain.

You may destroy my castles, but I have the timbers
to build ten thousand more.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXIV

Are there no far reaches in me, no unexplored worlds? Are there no undiscovered peoples? Am I so limited and defined?

Is there no far, far East, no sunset land? Is there no frozen North, no torrid equator?

Are there no horizons of yearning, no unwinged firmaments of longing? No depths and heights and breadths of unappeasement?

Have I no estate over which my soul has long made beaten paths? No things which yearning has long established as my own?

Is there nothing in me that soars and sings? No untrodden areas of delight? No undefined, ecstatic vistas?

Do I not quiver with joy's vagueness, with unnamed realization of dream? With undefined yearning for the ultimate of me?

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXV

I shall not mind what I am, if I have the courage
to nail it to the bulletin board on the public
square. My vindication shall be my zealot's
faith.

I am not less than the mountain range that
stretches away in its infinite line of being, that
lifts up its head, confident and without
apology.

My life is not less than the stars that come forth
in their place at night and shine.

Whatever I do, or am, give me the courage to
espouse it. I might know what to do about
sin or defects, but I should not know what to
do about cravenness.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXVI

Only I am unstable. The sun does not hesitate in its shining, the dawn presents in assurance.
Only I vacillate, am ill at ease.

Only I come forth in weakness, in unaccented action and performance, in the unfaith of life, in wavering unbelief and insecurity, doubting the time, the placement, and the reason for being.

Only I am unpoised. God is going His equitable way, the great law of cosmos has not been disturbed, the universe remains serene, the stars have not missed a night in the sky. Day and night continue to alternate. They have not been confused.

All these are not perturbed—why then I?

It is only I who am shouting and waving my hands, only I who am shrieking to space, who disclaim my security, who have not peace. The stars are quiet, the moon is serene, the earth is rhythmic. Only I am out of harmony and ill at ease.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXVII

Our prayers make beggars of us all. We pray for blessings, when they can only be evolved; for peace when it is a result; and for grace when it is a growth.

We ask as alms that which is ours by divine diligence. We pray for things to be bestowed that have their origin only in us, and for things to be given that are already in our possession.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXVIII

The meanness of life, but the splendor of its possibilities!

The miserable thing I make of it, but the God-
thing it might be!

I might drain it of its dead waters, and plant banks
of roses, and glad trees, and buoyant grasses.

I might entice the wanton winds to dance through
it, and the moonbeams to caper over it.

I might bring lovers to wander through its twilight
fragrance.

A SOUL'S FARING

LXXXIX

I have no quarrel with nature, and one day I shall
have none with individuals.

A SOUL'S FARING

XC

Somewhere that radiant thing, Life, lies latent in
the brier stem of me, and one day it will burst
forth in crimson roses.

One day the new spring soil of me will emit its
blossoming violet soul.

One night the lark will sing in my trees.

A SOUL'S FARING

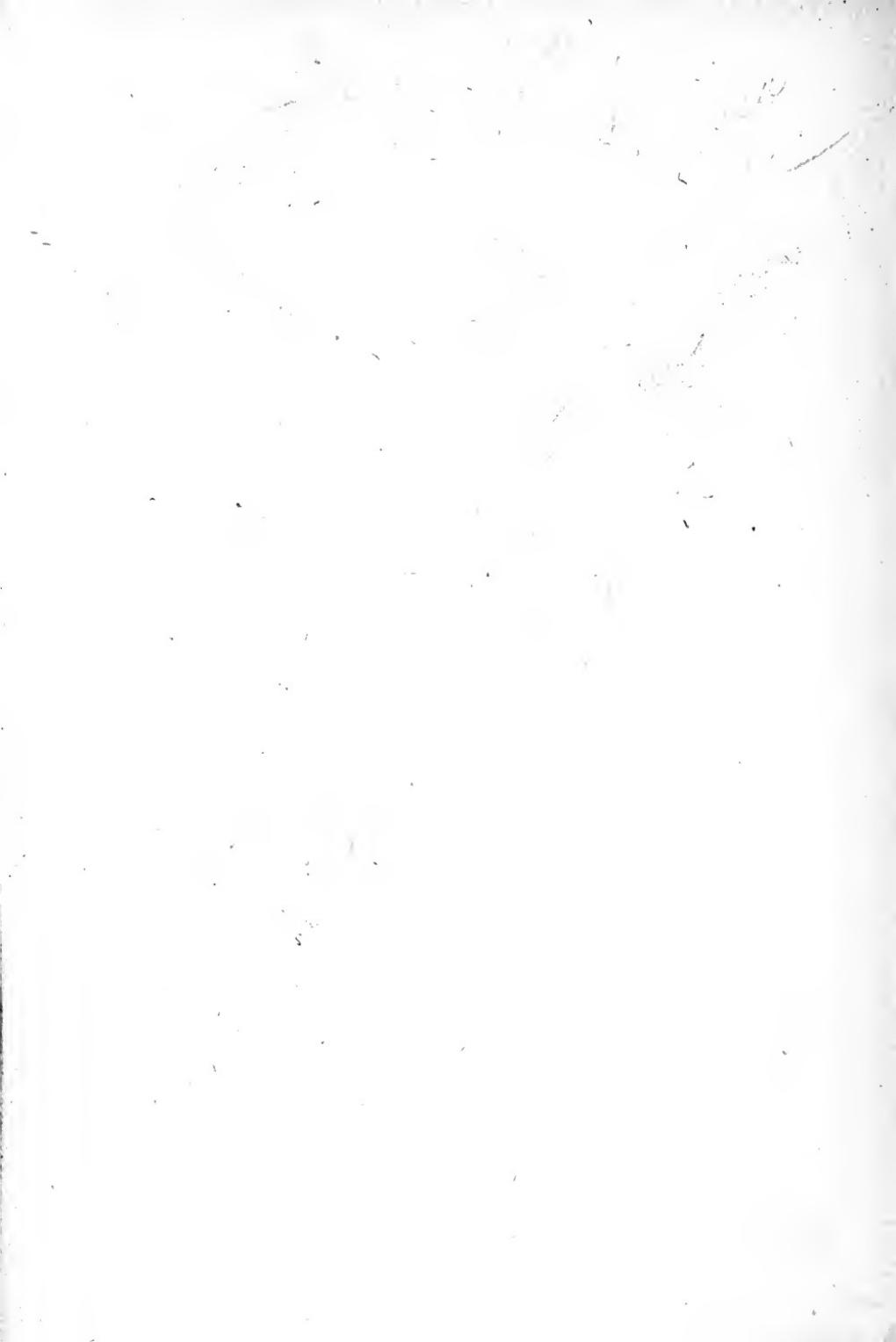
XCI

Somewhere there are fledglings in a nest that I
have come to feed, that must otherwise perish.
Somewhere some one prays to be released, some
one prays that I shall not be so long, that I
shall not tarry on the way.

The rabble is at my door, the world is demanding.
It holds out its shackled wrists, and points to
its greying temples.

And I am coming. I am delayed—delayed be-
cause I, too, am lost, but I am coming, and I
will arrive, and I will reach you!

The majestic grace of the
weeping willow
The dignity of the tall
Pine - the fragrance of
the pale fresia -
and the rhythmic cadence
of the sea as it
embraces the shore -
Leaps up from
the all
the way long -



I think from the only work I have
done on the subject - John Stetson
merely for the benefit of his
sons & grandsons & his
wife, comes up with the
shortest & best form of this God
for whom I have
had no opportunity - only
the blessing of his children
blocks - the publick
as I have from time
to make a promised w. Prof - Mrs Ann M. Graham
See what she makes

Stretch my hand to
the round sole - then
pulling several may
up at those I made
when hairy - but
the only sholders send
a moment of fear
I attack or repel
according to what
which I hold in my
pocket - See to it
that they attack
the ripe fruit.

"What does your "I like this" think
of itself? Very well. From Bruce both is
of want to see / Li- lead. - The visit.
like all sentiment - for this seed, not
that of Dominion - S. shall plead
true in favour of you and my wife. Then
my waters, having left pluckiness
my honest shall for
myself reading again —
faze.

May I draw the curse
of its vices - that from the
bitterness in my mouth
I spew out all that -
of the self -

Many such words have
come up the bitternesses
in God - and many may
have to follow with
helplessness for some
word that is best
with lessons he
is not yet ready to
learn

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I am a gatherer
of flowers of
the fields of
the world about me -
tomorrow about you.
Good about you.

Has yours me a don't
the day you come to us
the day we meet at the altar.

Has yours you are
with the day of your
marriage.

Has yours you are
with the day of your
wedding.

Has yours you are
and next
a yesterday you
will be a tomorrow you

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